

Independent Insurance Agents of America

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SUNSHINE PERIOD

OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER
MAY 5 2 31 PM '97



April 30, 1997

CAPITOL HILL OFFICE
SUITE 300
442 FIRST STREET, S.E.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20003
202/863-7000
FAX 202/863-7015
MAY 6 1997

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness,

On behalf of the 280,000 insurance agents and independent agencies represented by the Independent Insurance Agents of America (IIAA), I am writing to express our interest in the upcoming decision on proposed reductions in access charges and changes to universal service. There is a concern among the IIAA membership that many of the changes you are contemplating will increase fees on small businesses.

Every single insurance agent relies on quality phone service to conduct their business, whether it is taking a claim after an automobile accident or helping a customer during the floods in North Dakota. Telecommunications is a significant cost of the IIAA membership and an essential part of their business development. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was intended to reduce these costs.

One simple way to decrease the cost of telecommunications is to reduce access charges consumers pay to originate and terminate long distance calls. However, any efforts to cut access charges while increasing fees on phones for small business is bad policy and an unfair burden on small business. Access charges should be cut.

Many of the proposals being considered by the FCC penalize small business by insuring that they will face higher rates. Small business should not be singled out to bear the burden of telecommunications deregulation. The FCC should follow the intent of Congress and the understanding of the American people when the Telecommunications Act was passed: Lower rates and increased competition.

IIAA encourages you to reject any proposal that would unfairly target small business for increased fees. I thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul A. Equale".

Paul A. Equale
Senior Vice President
of Government Affairs

PAE/kb



Via Facsimile
April 28, 1997

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. NW Room 832
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

We at CareAmerica Health Plans are very concerned about your proposal to increase the business line Subscriber Line Charge and to impose a new charge, reportedly called a FERRO, of at least \$4.50 per line per month to support new telecommunications capabilities at schools, libraries and rural health care facilities. As a health plan with more than 263,000 group and Medicare members, we utilize approximately 800 phone lines at our company, 20 % of which are toll-free and provide free and direct access to our members should they need assistance with any aspect of their coverage or medical services. A fee of \$4.50 per line per month would add a charge of more than \$43,000 a year to our company's telephone costs, of which more than \$10,000 would be added to our current costs of providing toll-free service to these customers.

I urge you not to adopt the Subscriber Line Charge increase, which would impose an expensive, additional tax on all businesses and would impact many organizations' abilities to provide toll-free customer service and access. We believe that taxes to support telecommunications for schools, libraries, rural healthcare providers or others should be supported by all sectors, not just businesses who rely heavily on telecommunications.

It is time for the Commission to reform its rules governing access charges. All telecommunications consumers -- businesses as well as residential -- deserve protection from excessive monopoly prices. The Administration's social policy agenda should be addressed in other ways that do not penalize businesses which already are paying excessive rates to meet their telecommunications needs.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Mason
Director, Telecommunications Services
CareAmerica Health Plans

cc: Robert White, President
Bob Steiger, CIO

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Apollo

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OFFICE OF
The University of Phoenix, Inc.
Institute for Professional Development
Apollo Development Corporation
Apollo Press

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April 25, 1997

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communication Commission
1919 M Street NW Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

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MAY 6 1997

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communication Commission

Dear Commissioner Ness:

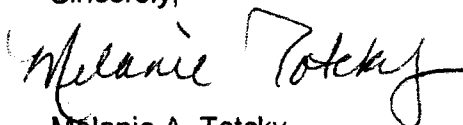
I understand that the FCC is considering a proposal to increase the business line Subscriber Line Charge and to impose a new charge, reportedly called a Federal Equitable Recovery Charge (FERC). The FERC charge is to be at least \$4.50 per line per month to support extending new telecommunications capabilities to schools, libraries and rural health care facilities. At the same time that the FCC is considering imposing these new costs on American businesses, I understand that the Commission will not take the long overdue step of bringing rates closer to the true economic cost of local access services.

I urge you not to adopt the foregoing proposals which would, in effect, impose a new tax on American businesses, regardless of whether it is characterized as a "rate re-balancing" or "modification of rate structures". The monetary burden of the \$4.50 FERC charge alone to my company would exceed \$10,000 per month.

With all due respect, I believe that the imposition of such taxes is the business of the people's representatives, not appointed officials. Nationwide educational and healthcare initiatives should be considered on a comprehensive basis by all interested authorities, not just as a telecommunications matter by the FCC.

The time for the Commission to reform its rules governing access charges, which are more than \$3 billion a year higher than they should be, is long overdue. All consumers, businesses as well as residential, deserve protection from excessive monopoly prices. The Administration's social policy agenda should be addressed in other ways and not get in the way of these reforms.

Sincerely,



Melanie A. Totcky
Manager, Telecommunications
Information Services Department





THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCE

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April 30, 1997

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Ms. Ness:

We have been informed that two issues currently before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) could significantly increase telecommunications costs to higher education institutions and other large multi-line business users.

One proposal may raise the cap on business multi-line subscriber line charges (SLC) and add a pre-subscribed line (PSL) surcharge. A decision by the FCC to implement this proposal could result in an increase in monthly charges of as much as \$1,672.00 at The University of Southern Mississippi.

The other proposal of concern is the reduction in interstate access charges by 40 to 50%. We have a telephone system behind a university owned private branch exchange (PBX), and receive revenue for long distance calls terminating on our system. Revenues from terminating these calls could be cut by up to \$2,000.00 or more each month at this institution.

As we understand it, the purpose of these proposals is compliance with the telecommunications act of 1996, and in particular to establish rules for discounted telecom services for K - 12 schools, libraries, and rural health facilities subsidized through the universal fund. While the cause seems worthy, we doubt the intent was for universities and colleges to subsidize the discounts for K - 12 schools, especially since we provide education and libraries too.

As a non profit, state supported institution of higher learning, our budget would be significantly impacted if the proposals are implemented. We request the proposals be amended to exclude colleges and universities.

Sincerely,

Dr. James R. Henderson
Vice President for Business & Finance

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DEERE & COMPANY

JOHN DEERE ROAD, MOLINE ILLINOIS 61265 U.S.A.

SUNSHINE PERIOD



May 6, 1997

RECEIVED
MAY 6 1997Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

96-45

The Honorable J Dennis Hastert
United States House of Representatives
2241 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Hastert:

Last December, the Federal Communications Commission initiated the most significant phase of its implementation of the new telecommunications law--its universal service and interstate access charges. Recent reports on the FCC's progress in setting these rates are extremely disturbing for multi-line users like Deere & Company and other businesses both large and small. According to the International Communications Association, if the FCC's most recent proposal is adopted overall multi-line users' interstate costs could increase by almost \$3 billion. This total approximates the amount the Commission plans to allocate for helping connect public K-12 schools, libraries and rural health care facilities to the Internet.

We do not question the wisdom of improving these entities' access to this communications and informational tool, but find the proposed funding mechanism objectionable. If not modified, a societal goal with widespread general application will be financed primarily by industries unrelated to telecommunications.

Deere & Company estimates the multi-line user surcharge for Internet services would cost the company over \$1 million annually. We urge the formulation of a more acceptable solution to this funding need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W. M. Coopman".
William M. Coopman

Telecommunications Regulatory Affairs

cc: Chairman Reed E. Hundt
Commissioner James D. Quello
Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong
Commissioner Susan Ness

CLARENDON SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO

SUNSHINE PERIOD

15 MAJOR DRIVE
POST OFFICE BOX 1252
MANNING, SOUTH CAROLINA 29102

ROSE H. WILDER, ED. D.
SUPERINTENDENT

April 15, 1997

The Honorable James Quello, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 29554

Re: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:


I am a superintendent from Clarendon School District Two, and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all school districts and education consortia will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board decision will guarantee that all school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge the FCC to fully support of the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools.

Thank you,

Sincerely,


Rose Hilliard-Wilder, Ed.D
Superintendent

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MAY 6 1997

JAMES QUAY

TELEPHONE:
803/435-4435

FAX:
803/435-8172

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NEW CASTLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
420 Fern Street
New Castle, PA 16101-2640

Telephone: (412) 656-4771
Fax (412) 656-4786

Marie L. Pisano
Board Secretary-Business Manager

Joseph A. Martin, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

April 17, 1997

The Honorable James Quello
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

I am the Business Manager from the New Castle Area School District in Pennsylvania and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

With this discount, we would be able to purchase new adoptions of textbooks which have repeatedly been cut from our local budget. Western Pennsylvania has been extremely hard hit and our school has lost \$13,000,000 of tax base in the last ten years and we rank ninth in the Commonwealth for local tax effort.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

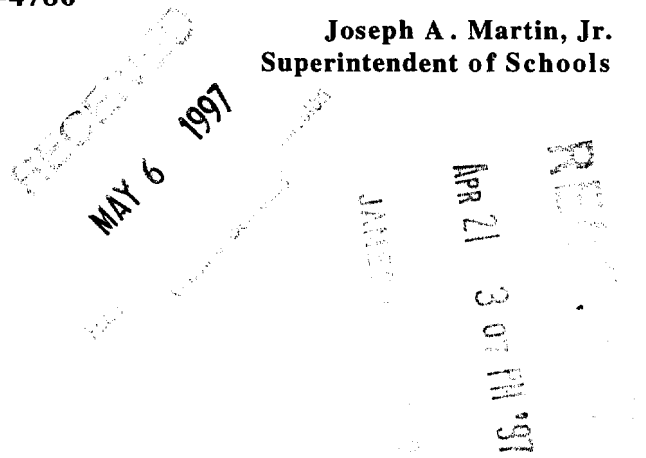
Thank you.

Sincerely,



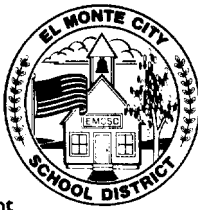
Marie L. Pisano
Board Secretary-Business Manager

cc: Board of Directors



EL MONTE CITY

3540 North Lexington Avenue



SCHOOL DISTRICT

El Monte, California 91731-2684 • (818) 453-3700

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

JEFF SEYMOUR.....District Superintendent
JOYCE ROEBUCK.....Deputy Superintendent
Business, Personnel & Administrative Services
ARMENÉ CHAYDARIAN.....Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
CARLOS MANRIQUE.....Assistant Superintendent, Student Support Services

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

MR. DAVID B. REED.....President
MRS. EMILY ISHIGAKI.....Vice-President
MRS. BONNIE JIMENEZ.....Clerk
MR. STEPHEN D. HAKE.....Member
MRS. SUSAN WELDON.....Member

James Quello, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 802
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello,

I am writing to you in regards to the federal "E-Rate" Telecommunications Discount Program. I am a locally elected school board member from El Monte City School District, and I would like to express my strong support for this program and the proposed regulations governing its implementation.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have access to the Internet and the ability to provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of schools across the country, and more importantly, the plan will bring telecommunications services directly to the classrooms, where they can have the greatest impact on students. It is important to remember that each element of this plan is vital to the overall success of the discount program. Therefore, the inclusion of discounts for internal classroom connections should not be eliminated, nor should the size of the Universal Service Fund be reduced. As I am sure you are aware, this program is essential for preparing our students to enter the workforce of tomorrow.

The E-Rate Telecommunications Discount Program is desperately overdue and our students need these discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge you and the other FCC commissioners to fully support the recommendations of the Joint Board and approve the proposed final regulations regarding the discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Emily Ishigaki
Vice President, El Monte
City School Board of Education

El/jd



May 6, 1997

To: FCC Commissioner, Susan Ness

Madam,

The Radiology Department of Weatherford Hospital Authority is involved in telemedicine and aware of the difficulties and pitfalls that rural healthcare providers encounter, with obtaining reasonable access to telecommunications. We pay in excess of \$1100 monthly for a nearly non-existent teleradiology program, that is mired in the large communications companies and politics.

Therefore we are most supportive of any legislation, that provides reasonable and financially feasible access to telecommunication networks for our rural patients.

Sincerely

Grover Taylor, Rad Supr.

**WE SUPPORT UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT AND TOLL-FREE
INTERNET ACCESS, THANK YOU**

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

SUNSHINE PERIOD

May 1, 1997

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. NW, Room 832
Washington, D.C. 20054

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I write in support of meaningful discounts on telecommunications services for schools and libraries so that every school child and life-long learner can have access to the world of information technology. The Telecommunications Act - through its Universal Service Fund provisions - mandates the development of special discount rates for all schools and libraries so that they can secure services at affordable prices.

There is no doubt that advanced telecommunications services are important to improving learning, sparking the imagination and leveling the playing field for all our nation's people. Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life-learners can connect with the technology they would need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century. As of now our school system is unable to afford Internet capabilities to extend access to each classroom. Our local telephone company has been reluctant to give our schools reduced rates. We would like for our students to have the same opportunities that are afforded to students in more affluent areas. Without the passage of the Telecommunications Act, there is very little hope that we will ever be able to provide this opportunity.

Last November, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a set of recommendations for implementing the Universal Service Fund provisions related to the schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our learning institutions significant discounts on all services that are commercially available, with deeper discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and more expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

I urge your support for the Joint Board's recommendations. Taken as a whole, they will provide affordable discounts for a full range of services needed to meet each community's diverse needs. Most importantly, these provisions, if adopted by the FCC, will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wright

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

May 1, 1997

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. NW, Room 832
Washington, D.C. 20054

Dear Commissioner Ness:

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There is no doubt that advanced telecommunications services are important to improving learning, sparking the imagination and leveling the playing field for all our nation's people. Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life-learners can connect with the technology they would need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century. As of now our school system is unable to afford Internet capabilities to extend access to each classroom. Our local telephone company has been reluctant to give our schools reduced rates. We would like for our students to have the same opportunities that are afforded to students in more affluent areas. Without the passage of the Telecommunications Act, there is very little hope that we will ever be able to provide this opportunity.

Last November, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a set of recommendations for implementing the Universal Service Fund provisions related to the schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our learning institutions significant discounts on all services that are commercially available, with deeper discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and more expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

I urge your support for the Joint Board's recommendations. Taken as a whole, they will provide affordable discounts for a full range of services needed to meet each community's diverse needs. Most importantly, these provisions, if adopted by the FCC, will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

Sincerely,

Christi Howen

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**Indiana State
University**

Office of the President

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

May 2, 1997

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness,

It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission is considering funding the Universal Service requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 in part through major increases in business Subscriber Line Charges, through imposition of a new pre-subscribed line surcharge on all business lines, and through a surcharge on each pager and cellular telephone. Whether intended or not, such charges would adversely impact non-profit, tax supported institutions like Indiana State University. Our budgets are already under severe strain in accommodating the extremely rapid growth in the application of information technology in higher education. A further increase in expenses would require either a like increase in appropriations from state tax monies, an increase in tuition, or scaling back our own programs to support primary and secondary school enhancements. We do not believe such was the intent of Congress, and ask that consideration be given to exempting non-profit organizations from any increase in the Subscriber Line Charge and from payment of the pre-subscribed line and pager-cellular telephone surcharges.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

John Moore
President

cc: Senator Richard Lugar
Senator Daniel Coats
U.S. Representative Edward Pease

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MAY 6 1997

JAMES H. QUELLO

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

1300 E. Northern Parkway
Baltimore, MD 21239-1998
410-433-8880
FAX: 410-323-8816



April 28, 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

The Honorable James Quello
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

I am Kim Sheridan, Teacher, Mercy High School, Baltimore, Maryland, and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunication Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools and the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital, as is your inclusion of Internet Service Provider costs. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you,

Kim Sheridan

**MERCY
HIGH SCHOOL**

1300 E. Northern Parkway
Baltimore, MD 21239-1998
410-433-8880
FAX: 410-323-8816



April 28, 1997

The Honorable James Quello
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

I am Tricia Potts, Teacher, Mercy High School, Baltimore, Maryland, and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunication Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools and the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital, as is your inclusion of Internet Service Provider costs. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you,

Tricia Potts

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JAMES M. QUELLO

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

1300 E. Northern Parkway
Baltimore, MD 21239-1998
410-433-8880
FAX: 410-323-8816



April 28, 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

The Honorable James Quello
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

I am Terri Pohl, Technology Coordinator, Mercy High School, Baltimore, Maryland, and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunication Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools and the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital, as is your inclusion of Internet Service Provider costs. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you,

Terri Pohl

Terri Pohl



WOODLAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1620 LIVINGSTON STREET • MANDEVILLE, LA 70448

MARIAN C. ARROWSMITH, PRINCIPAL
JEAN KRIEGER, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



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April 8, 1997

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 96-45

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JAMES
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Dear Commissioner Quello:

I am a teacher from Woodlake Elementary School in St. Tammany Parish, Mandeville, Louisiana and I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries will have affordable access to the information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools and poorest school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol Ballard



Montana Education Association

1232 East Sixth Avenue • Helena, Montana 59601 • 406-442-4250
1-800-398-0826 (Toll-free) • Fax: 406-443-5081

April 18, 1997

James Quello, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. St. NW, Room 802
Washington, D.C. 20054

RE: CC: Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

On behalf of the 10,000 members of the Montana Education Association, I am writing in support of the Federal-State Joint Board's recommendation that would provide meaningful discounts on telecommunications services for schools and libraries so every student can have affordable access to the world of information technology. The Universal Services Fund provision of the Telecommunication Act mandates the development of special discounts for all schools and libraries so they can secure the services at affordable prices.

Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life-long learners can connect with technology they will need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century.

The Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service made a unanimous recommendation for the implementation of the Universal Services Fund provisions related to schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our schools in Montana significant discounts on all services, with deep discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and most expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

We cannot afford to have our schools become segregated into technology "haves" and the technology "have-nots." We need to prepare all of our children for the future.

I ask for your support of the Joint Board's recommendations. These provisions will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

Sincerely,

Eric Feaver, President
Montana Education Association

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MAY 6 1997

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DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL SUNSHINE PERIOD

**NANUET PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

101 Church Street • Nanuet, NY 10954

Every Child A Winner!

MARK S. MCNEILL, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

PHILIP M. SIONS
School Business Administrator
Phone: (914) 627-9881
Fax: (914) 623-1963

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER
3057 111 58

May 2, 1997

Susan Ness, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 814
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I am the Superintendent of schools for the Nanuet Union Free School District. On behalf of the residents of Nanuet, the Board of Education and the entire school community, I would like to express our appreciation of your efforts to insure that school districts such as Nanuet will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

Implementation of the discount plan contained in the Telecommunications Act and promoted by the federal-State Joint board will guarantee that all schools - regardless of their financial condition - will be afforded the opportunity for Internet accessibility and distance-learning capabilities.

Our district needs substantial discounts for our telecommunications services in the upcoming 1997-98 school year. I strongly urge the FCC to support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Mark S. McNeill
Superintendent of Schools

MSM:cap

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL
SUNSHINE PERIOD

May 1, 1997

Jill Eberhart
School Board Member
Burlington RE-6J School District
851 13th Street
Burlington, CO 80807

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
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OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER
SUSAN NESS
MAY 1 6 19 PM '97

The Honorable Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner:

I am a school board member for the Burlington RE-6J District in Colorado. Thank you for your work and dedication in attempting to supply affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

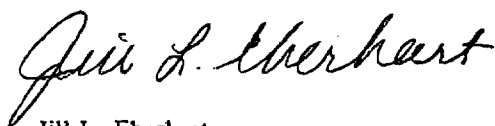
The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board decision will guarantee that all school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The proposed act will help address the needs of our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Internal classroom connections for discounts is, what I consider, a necessary part of this plan.

Our school district is a small district (approximately 800 students) in eastern Colorado. The financial obstacles compounded by our isolated geographic location have made it impossible to gain access to distance-learning programs to date. We have managed to begin offering access to the Internet only just this year. As is no surprise to you, other capital improvements sorely needed coupled with the amount of money necessary to even gain access to other programs such as distance-learning seems unsurmountable. After the infrastructure is in place, attempting to find funds to maintain access to such services as the Internet at current market rates puts significant financial strain on our District. The discounts proposed in the Telecommunications Act would help make this goal a reality for our students.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools.

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Jill L. Eberhart
School Board Member

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL **SUNSHINE PERIOD**

MAY 1 4 22 PM '97

RECEIVED
OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER
SUSAN NESS

400 Central Park West - 5P
New York, NY 10025
April 23, 1997

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
Room 844
1919 M Street NW
Washington DC 20554

RECEIVED

MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

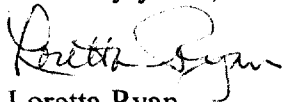
Dear Commissioner Ness:

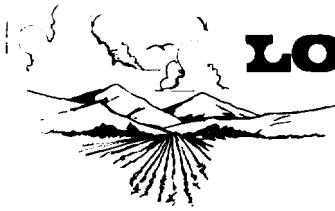
As a social studies teacher at the Calhoun School in Manhattan, I would like to thank you for your work with the Federal Communications Commission. I am concerned, however, that the Telecommunications Act may not continue to include the proposed education rate, which would provide affordable access to the Internet and the World Wide Web for all schools and libraries.

Today's technology can provide rich resources for students. Unfortunately, it can also serve to widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots." It is imperative that we, as educators and policy makers, do not further contribute to this bifurcation. The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The discount will address the needs of all schools, and the inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn.

Our students--those at Calhoun and at schools throughout New York City--need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge you and the FCC to support fully the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Sincerely yours,


Loretta Ryan



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LOST HILLS Union School District

JOHN R. BOGIE, Ed.D.
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

TRUSTEES

LLOYD L. FEWELL, President
GERRY L. EVANS, Clerk
DONALD W. ELHOLM
SANTIAGO GAONA
WILLIAM C. RODEN

OFFICE LOCATIONS

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

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14823 Office Lane
Lost Hills, CA 93249
(805) 797-2626
Fax (805) 797-2580

LOST HILLS COOPERATIVE

Mailing: P.O. Box 158
14835 Office Lane
Lost Hills, CA 93249
(805) 797-3007
Fax (805) 797-2580

LOST HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mailing: P.O. Box 158
14821 Primary Court
Lost Hills, CA 93249
(805) 797-3019
Fax (805) 797-3015

A. M. THOMAS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mailing: P.O. Box 158
20979 Lobos Court
Lost Hills, CA 93249
(805) 797-3011
Fax (805) 797-3015

MAY 6 1997 April 29, 1997

Mr. James Quello, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 802
Washington, D.C. 20554

SUNSHINE PERIOD

Dear Commissioner Quello:

RE: CC DOCKET NO. 96-45

The Board of Trustees of the Lost Hills Union School District would like to thank you for your dedication to ensuring that all schools will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

Heretofore, our rural community has been unable to avail itself of access to the Information Superhighway due to the inordinately high costs involved in acquiring service.

If our students are to have access to this technology, deep discounts for telecommunication services must be gained this year. I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN R. BOGIE, Ed.D.
District Superintendent

JRB/mh

"Each child in the world is unique."



READY SPRINGS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

10862 SPENCEVILLE ROAD, PENN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 95946
(916) 432-1118 • FAX: (916) 432-9473

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GREG PETERSON
PRINCIPAL

LARRY BABCOCK
SUPERINTENDENT

April 28, 1997

The Honorable James Quello
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED
MAY 6 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

MAY 5 4 10 PM '97

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

We are writing to you in regard to the federal "E-Rate" Telecommunications Discount Program. We are locally elected school board members from Ready Springs School District, and we would like to express our strong support for this program and the proposed regulations governing its implementation.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have access to the Internet and the ability to provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of schools across the country, and the plan will bring telecommunications services directly to the classrooms where they can have the greatest impact on students.

The inclusion of discounts for internal classroom connections should not be eliminated, nor should the size of the Universal Service Fund be reduced. Each element of the plan is vital, because we are preparing students to enter tomorrow's workforce.

The E-Rate Telecommunications Discount Program is overdue. **Our students need these discounts for telecommunications services this year.** We urge you and the other FCC commissioners to fully support the recommendations of the Joint Board and approve the proposed final regulations regarding the discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Victoria M. Oliver
Victoria Oliver

Pamela W. Wolfe
Pam Wolfe

Clinton Patche
Clinton Patche

Robin McCrary
Robin McCrary

Dave Walker
Dave Walker

Larry Babcock
Larry Babcock, Superintendent



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUSINESS AND FINANCE

96-45
DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

April 30, 1997

MAY 6 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

James E. Quello, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Mr. Quello:

We have been informed that two issues currently before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) could significantly increase telecommunications costs to higher education institutions and other large multi-line business users.

One proposal may raise the cap on business multi-line subscriber line charges (SLC) and add a pre-subscribed line (PSL) surcharge. A decision by the FCC to implement this proposal could result in an increase in monthly charges of as much as \$1,672.00 at The University of Southern Mississippi.

The other proposal of concern is the reduction in interstate access charges by 40 to 50%. We have a telephone system behind a university owned private branch exchange (PBX), and receive revenue for long distance calls terminating on our system. Revenues from terminating these calls could be cut by up to \$2,000.00 or more each month at this institution.

As we understand it, the purpose of these proposals is compliance with the telecommunications act of 1996, and in particular to establish rules for discounted telecom services for K - 12 schools, libraries, and rural health facilities subsidized through the universal fund. While the cause seems worthy, we doubt the intent was for universities and colleges to subsidize the discounts for K - 12 schools, especially since we provide education and libraries too.

As a non profit, state supported institution of higher learning, our budget would be significantly impacted if the proposals are implemented. We request the proposals be amended to exclude colleges and universities.

Sincerely,

Dr. James R. Henderson
Vice President for Business & Finance

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Commissioner James H. Quello
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

MAY 6 10 23 AM '97

April 21, 1997

JAMES H. QUULLO

MAY 6 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Commissioner Quello:

We are faculty and staff from Mt. Harmony Elementary School in Calvert County, Maryland. We are writing in support of the Universal Service discounts for schools and libraries that have been recommended by the Joint Board.

We would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all schools and libraries will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all of our schools, and, importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the work force of tomorrow.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunication services this year. We urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mt. Harmony Elementary Staff

Lillian Rowland

Janice Kranen

Rudence M. Waly

Shirley Jackson

Chris Bantz

Barbara Hingle



WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

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Washington, D.C. 20001
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Fax (202) 624-7707

www.westgov.org

April 29, 1997

Commissioner James H. Quello
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Quello:

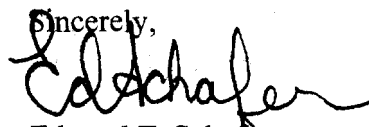
Re: Universal Service Rules; Healthcare providers and section
254(h)(1)(A) of the 1996 Act

As you know, the Western Governors' Association (WGA) has actively participated in the FCC's process to implement the healthcare provisions in the 1996 Telecommunications Act. We write once more to urge you to do all you can to make telemedicine and other healthcare uses of the telecommunications network as cost-effective and as workable as possible.

Specifically, with your rules due to be published shortly, the WGA again asks you to eliminate the user costs associated with mileage-based charges. In the West and in many other parts of the country, where traditional charges penalize those who live and work far outside urban areas, telemedicine providers continue to struggle to pay charges with high mileage components. This is precisely the reason Congress called for comparability between urban and rural areas in the 1996 Act. In order to obviate the effects of distance, rural charges for certain health care providers should be "reasonably comparable" to charges for similar services in urban areas. Without this comparability, the benefits promised in this part of the Act will never be realized.

Related to the mileage charge issue, I understand the Commission continues to debate the wisdom of its order directing toll-free Internet access for health care providers who lack local Internet service. You should clearly apply the comparability standard here as well. At this point Internet service is the standard vehicle for a great deal of public service communications, including healthcare. Full use of this application will be delayed in rural areas unless it is reasonably priced. Please take the opportunity to make Internet access affordable for rural health care providers.

Thank you again for considering the needs of the West in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Edward T. Schafer
WGA Chairman
Governor of North Dakota

96-45
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VIA FAX

SUNSHINE PERIOD